

Metropolitan Family Services

150 years of amazing strength

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May 29, 2008

Chairman Kevin J. Martin
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Martin:

Metropolitan Family Services was delighted to be selected as one of two beneficiaries of ONXRT: Live from the Archives, Volume 9. We are grateful for the partnership of WXRT-FM in supporting our mission to provide and mobilize the services needed to strengthen families and communities. Metropolitan Family Services is especially grateful for the generous donation of \$57,180 to our Out-of-School-Time programs made possible by the sales of ONXRT Volume 9. We received this contribution on March 12, 2007.

Metropolitan Family Services operates Out-of-School-Time programs at eleven Chicago Public Schools around the city. Our partner public schools are considered, "low performing, high priority schools" by the Illinois State Board of Education and are located in low-income and often violent neighborhoods. Students who live in these communities face daily and constant challenges to stay safe and succeed in school.

Out-of-School-Time programs target youth who are at risk of school failure, dropping out, or engaging in risky or criminal behaviors offering them a dynamic environment and safe haven in the dangerous after school hours. Academics are the focus of Out-of-School-Time services, with tutoring, homework help, and math and reading programs. Metropolitan Family Services provides life skills education and access to recreational and cultural activities to expand the horizons of low-income youth. Metropolitan Family Services also implements the best practices approach of the community schools model at our partner schools. This model positions the school as a resource hub for students, parents, teachers, school administrators and community members which heightens the importance and value of that school.

Last year, Metropolitan Family Services reached 1,605 youth clients and 637 family members through the Out-of-School-Time programs. Results from the program include:

- Youth are more interested in school - 84.6% improved or maintained their overall academic performance.
- Youth are better able to communicate with their peers and make better life decisions - 83.5% improved or maintained their relationship with peers and adults.
- Youth are more connected to the surrounding community - 76.1% of youth maintained or increased their participation in school and community activities.

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A strong example of community involvement comes from one of Metropolitan Family Services' Out-of-School-Time programs, which established the "Learn and Serve Take Charge Youth Board" to help teens and young adults build their leadership and communication skills. Students on the Youth Board identify a community problem and then create a plan of action to address the problem, and in the process empower themselves and strengthen their community.

The Youth Board's most recent project was inspired by one of their peers – a 16 year old girl awaiting a kidney transplant. Students partnered with two local dialysis centers to learn about kidney function, disease prevention, and maintaining kidney health. Students focused the service portion of their project on spending time with patients receiving dialysis treatment. Youth played games, read, and talked to adult and youth dialysis patients to take their mind off of the medical procedure. The Illinois Department of Human Services, who provided the grant to start the Youth Board, plans to use the dialysis program as a model for other organizations.

The WXRT-FM gift of \$57,180 allowed Metropolitan Family Services to continue Out-of-School-Time programming to facilitate the positive development of at-risk youth. This donation will partially support:

- Teacher stipends that provide extra instruction time to build on lessons from the regular school day, tutoring them and assisting with homework.
- Program Coordinator salaries that allow for the creation and development of programs including life skills training and recreational activities.
- Parent and Volunteer Coordinator stipends that allow for a collaborative atmosphere between parents and school personnel, inviting parents to volunteer on advisory boards and program activities.

In addition to programming support, WXRT-FM has been a critical element in Metropolitan's ability to raise awareness of issues facing the young and old, unemployed and working poor, long-time citizens and new immigrants in Chicago's struggling communities. Through significant promotional exposure; both on-air and print Metropolitan's name and mission was heard throughout Chicago.

Metropolitan is pleased to continue this strong relationship with WXRT-FM, a partnership that provides valued support for major annual events such as its Holiday Celebration and metropolis, the latter presented by Metropolitan's young professionals' board.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Chicago's favorite radio station, WXRT-FM, for its outstanding commitment to Metropolitan Family Services' Out-of-School-Time programs. We are proud to partner with WXRT-FM to help low-income and at-risk students in Chicago strengthen their ability to succeed in school and in life.

Sincerely,

Richard L. Jones, Ph.D.
President and CEO